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IN MEMORIAM

DWIGHT C. MCGOON (1925-1999)

Some years ago, but after the close of World War II, Dr Jim Priestly, at that time chairman of the Board of Governors of the Mayo Clinic, brought a young man to see me. He was introduced as Dwight McGoon, and I was told (I believe) that he was the chief medical officer for the United States Air Forces in Germany. I was told that he had trained at Johns Hopkins University and then at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and that he came to visit us at the very strong recommendation of Dr Alfred Blalock.

Such an introduction surely portended great things for this young man, and great things he did accomplish. It is true that his list of important contributions was shortened by an ultimately fatal disease, but that did not prevent his active years from being highly productive. In his early years at the Mayo Clinic, Dwight had a major interest in congenital heart disease and in the surgery of valvular heart disease, particularly aortic valve disease. To these and other areas he made monumental contributions, both in the everyday care of sick people and in blazing new trails. In his later years, he served as president of The American Association for Thoracic Surgery (1984) and as Editor of this Journal (1977-1987).

Perhaps, however, it is not these specific things that so distinguish him. He was a man of great integrity and possessed a stature that steadily grew as the years



passed. Even after being confined to his home by his illness, he displayed enormous dignity and competence to every visitor, including myself.

There is no way that words can substitute for his absence among us or properly pay tribute to a very great man. We all miss him every moment of the day.

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